

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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R 171908Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1939

INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

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TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: FRG YOUTH AND THE OCTOBER 3 ELECTION

REF: BONN 10199 (75) NOTAL; BONN A-118 (76) NOTAL

BEGIN SUMMARY: WEST GERMAN YOUTH DO NOT FIND IN THE  
1976 BUNDESTAG ELECTION CAMPAIGN THE EMOTIONAL THEME  
(OSTPOLITIK) AND CHARISMATIC CANDIDATE (WILLY BRANDT)  
OF FOUR YEARS AGO. THE CDU/CSU HAS NONETHELESS BEEN  
ABLE TO ENLIST A NOTICEABLY LARGE SEGMENT OF ITS YOUTH-  
FUL SUPPORTERS IN ACTIVE SUPPORT OF THE KOHL CAUSE.  
POLLS REVEAL A MAJORITY OF FRG YOUTH STILL FAVOR THE  
SOCIAL-LIBERAL COALITION, ALTHOUGH WITH A PERCEIVABLE  
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SWING OF SYMPATHY FROM LEFT TO CENTER AMONG YOUNGER

MALES. THE POSSIBILITY OF A RELATIVELY LOW TURNOUT OF YOUNG SPD/FDP VOTERS COULD HURT THE COALITION IN THE PRESENT TIGHT RACE. SEVERAL IN THE 20 TO 35 AGE GROUP FROM ALL THE PARTIES STAND A GOOD CHANCE OF BEING ELECTED TO THE EIGHTH BUNDESTAG. END OF SUMMARY.

1. BY DEFINITION, ANYONE UNDER 35 YEARS OF AGE IS CONSIDERED TO BE A YOUTH IN THE FRG POLITICAL SPECTRUM. SOME POLLING SURVEYS, HOWEVER, PREFER TO EXAMINE THE VIEWS OF ONLY THOSE UNDER 30, 25, OR EVEN THAT GROUP ELIGIBLE TO VOTE THIS YEAR FOR THE FIRST TIME, THAT IS, THOSE IN THE 18 TO 21 BRACKET. IN THE 1972 ELECTION A CONSIDERABLE MAJORITY OF THESE FIRST-TIME VOTERS FAVORED THE SPD/FDP CANDIDATES, MOTIVATED IN LARGE PART BY THE EMOTIONAL APPEAL OF THE BRANDT-SCHEEL "OSTPOLITIK." IN 1976 THERE ARE 3.3 MILLION YOUNG WEST GERMANS IN THIS LATTER AGE BRACKET, WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR APPROXIMATELY 8 PERCENT OF THE 41.6 MILLION ELIGIBLE VOTERS.

2. WHILE THIS YEAR THERE IS NO BURNING ISSUE TO ATTRACT THE EMOTIONAL ATTENTION OF WEST GERMAN VOTING YOUTH, NONETHELESS, THE COMBINATION OF AN INCREASINGLY CHAOTIC EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM (REFAIR) AND THE DECREASING AVAILABILITY OF YOUTH EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES WILL BE AN INFLUENCING FACTOR FOR MANY. THIS SITUATION IS TO A LARGE EXTENT DUE TO THE LARGE PUPIL MASS CAUSED BY HIGH BIRTH RATES IN THE IMMEDIATE POSTWAR DECADES. THE BIRTH RATE INCREASED REGULARLY UNTIL 1966, WHEN IT STARTED TO DROP AT A DRAMATIC RATE. THIS POPULATION PATTERN PLACED SCHOOL SYSTEMS AND THE LABOR MARKET IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION THAT WAS FORESEEN BUT NOT PROPERLY PLANNED FOR. AT THE TIME LOUDLY PROCLAIMED EDUCATIONAL REFORM PROGRAMS OFTEN PROVED UNABLE TO DELIVERED WHAT HAD BEEN PROMISED. AT THE SAME TIME, THE STAGNATED WEST GERMAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE PAST TWO YEARS HAS ALSO PROVED A DETRIMENT TO YOUTH ADVANCEMENT.

3. THE CDU/CSU ARGUES THAT IF FRG LABOR POLICIES DO NOT SOON IMPROVE, THE PRESENT UNEMPLOYMENT TOTAL COULD BE DOUBLED. A FAVORITE KOHL CAMPAIGN THEME IS HIS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WARNING THAT IF THE TREND IS NOT CHANGED, IT IS LIKELY THAT WITHIN A FEW YEARS THIS COULD MEAN ONE MILLION YOUNG GERMANS WOULD BE UNEMPLOYED. CDU SECRETARY-GENERAL BIEDENKOPF ARGUES THAT HELP ON THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING SCENE IS ALSO NEEDED IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE. HE AND HIS PARTY MAINTAIN THAT PRIVATE FIRMS SHOULD MAINTAIN RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND BE GIVEN TAX INCENTIVE SUPPORT. HE ARGUES THAT GOVERN-

MENT COALITION LEGISLATION TO INVOLVE THE GOVERNMENT  
MORE IN THIS EFFORT WILL RESULT IN SLOW AND CUMBERSOME  
MEASURES. A BUREAUCRACY WOULD HAVE TO BE ESTABLISHED,  
HE ASSERTS, WHICH COULD TAKE UP TO TWO YEARS TO PLACE  
INTO ACTION. ON THE EDUCATIONAL SIDE, THE UNION PAR-  
TIES CHARGE THAT EDUCATION MINISTER ROHDE HAS NOT BEEN  
AT ALL SUCCESSFUL IN HIS REFORM POLICIES, CHANGES THAT  
WERE NEVER FAVORED BY THE OPPOSITION, PARTICULARLY IN  
HESSE. THE CDU/CSU MAINTAINS THAT KOHL'S SHADOW

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1940

INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

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CABINET CHOICE, BAVARIA'S YOUNG AND MODERATE-LIBERAL

CULTURAL MINISTER HANS MAIER, WOULD BE MUCH MORE EFFECTIVE IN ROHDE'S POSITION.

4. THE SPD AND FDP ARGUE ON THE OTHER HAND THAT YOUTH ARE BEING WELL CARED FOR, THAT UNEMPLOYMENT IS DECREASING, THAT CIVIL RIGHTS ARE MORE RESPECTED UNDER A SOCIAL-LIBERAL GOVERNMENT, AND THAT A CDU/CSU GOVERNMENT WOULD MEAN AN END TO SEVERAL PROGRESSIVE PROGRAMS ACHIEVED IN THE PAST SEVEN YEARS. TO A LARGE EXTENT THEIRS IS A DEFENSIVE ARGUMENT WHICH PLACES THE JUSOS AND JUDOS IN THE (FOR THEM) UNHAPPY POSITION OF HAVING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO RUN AROUND PRAISING THE CURRENT BONN ESTABLISHMENT MORE THAN THEY NORMALLY WOULD LIKE TO DO.

5. GENERALLY, THE THREE PARLIAMENTARY PARTY YOUTH GROUPS SUPPORT THE POLITICAL PLATFORMS OF THEIR CANDIDATES, BUT WITH NOTICEABLE DEGREES OF DIFFERENCE. THE CDU/CSU'S JUNGE UNION MEMBERS FIND LITTLE FAULT WITH THE CDU/CSU PROGRAMS OR INDEED WITH THE CONTROVERSIAL POLITICAL SLOGAN "FREEDOM OR INSTEAD OF SOCIALISM." THE YOUNG SOCIALISTS ARE UNCOMFORTABLE WITH MANY OF THE SPD POLICIES, BUT THEY HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVELY PRESSED INTO SUPPORTING A SCHMIDT CANDIDACY IN LOW KEY. THE JUSOS ARE TEMPORARILY KEEPING QUIET ABOUT THEIR CONTROVERSIAL INVESTMENT GUIDANCE IDEAS AND THEIR PROPOSALS FOR NATIONALIZATION OF CERTAIN INFLUENTIAL BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL FIRMS. THE YOUNG DEMOCRATS SUPPORT THE FDP CAUSE BUT AT AN EVEN GREATER DISTANCE. AS LATE AS SEPTEMBER 14 JUDO CHAIRMAN HANS PETER KNIRSCH DECLARED THAT THE YOUNG LIBERAL SUPPORTERS WERE CONDUCTING A CAMPAIGN SEPARATE FROM THAT OF THE FDP, BECAUSE THEY THOUGHT SOME OF THE FREE DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL AIMS WERE NOT LIBERAL ENOUGH.

6. IN A RECENT CONVERSATION WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS THE CDU'S KURT BIEDENKOPF MENTIONED THAT IN ACTUAL FACT FRG YOUTH TEND IN LARGE MASS TO FOLLOW THE POLITICAL INCLINATIONS OF THEIR PARENTS. AS THEY GROW OLDER AND MOVE AWAY FROM HOME, THIS THEN CHANGES. HE FELT THAT UP TO 85 PERCENT OF FRG YOUTH FIT THIS MOLD. THE RESULTS OF A SURVEY TAKEN IN THE SPRING OF 1976 BY THE ALLENSBACH POLLING INSTITUTE SUPPORT THIS THESIS. WHILE 68 PERCENT OF THE SAMPLING QUESTIONED CLAIMED TO DISAGREE WITH THE VIEWS OF THEIR PARENTS IN SEX MATTERS, THE NUMBER OF THOSE DISAGREEING IN RELIGIOUS ISSUES DROPPED TO 42 PERCENT, AND ONLY 36 PERCENT REPORTED DISAGREEMENT OVER POLITICAL ISSUES. A CHART BREAKDOWN OF YOUTH SAMPLED REVEALED THAT THIS POLITICAL

CLEFT WAS GREATEST BETWEEN THOSE IN THE 25 TO 34 AGE GROUP, MANY OF WHOM HAD LEFT HOME, BUT WAS ALMOST NEGLIGIBLE IN THE 15 TO 24 AGE GROUP. (REFTEL PROVIDES A MORE IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF THE ATTITUDES OF MODERN WEST LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GERMAN YOUTH.)

7. A CONFIDENTIAL POLL EARLIER IN THE YEAR THAT SOUGHT TO DETERMINE THE DEGREE OF POLITICAL SUPPORT OF THE FRG PRINCIPAL PARTIES AMONGST YOUTH CONFIRMED THAT OF LATE THERE HAS BEEN SOME SHIFT FROM LEFT TO CENTER-RIGHT. IN THE YOUNGER 18 TO 24 YEAR OLD GROUP, THERE WAS A JUMP FROM 29.2 PERCENT TO 37.7 PERCENT OF SUPPORT FOR THE CDU/CSU AND AN INCREASE FROM 3.8 PERCENT TO 11.2 PERCENT FOR THE FDP. CORRESPONDINGLY, THE SPD SUPPORT DROPPED FROM 63.8 PERCENT TO 47.8 PERCENT. (COMMENT: ACTIVE PROPAGANDA EFFORTS BY THE UNION PARTIES AMONGST GERMAN TEENAGERS DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS THROUGH THE "SCHUELER UNION" MAY HAVE PLAYED A ROLE HERE.) THOSE FAVORING OTHER SPLINTER PARTIES REMAINED ALMOST THE SAME, 3.2 PERCENT VERSUS 3.3 PERCENT. A SIMILAR TREND, NOT SO NOTICEABLE, WAS EVIDENCED IN THE 25 TO 29 YEAR OLD GROUP. THIS IS A SEGMENT OF YOUTH STILL INFLUENCED SOMEWHAT BY ANTI-VIET NAM AND PRO-"OSTPOLITIK" VIEWS. HERE THE CDU/CSU SUPPORT ROSE FROM 39.6 PERCENT TO 41.7 PERCENT AND THAT OF THE FDP FROM 4.4 PERCENT TO 7.4 PERCENT; SUPPORT FOR THE SPD DROPPED FROM 55.2 PERCENT TO 49.1 PERCENT. THE NUMBER OF THOSE OPTING FOR OTHER PARTIES INCREASED ONLY SLIGHTLY. PARTICULARLY THE FIRST OF THESE TWO YOUTH BREAKDOWNS MATCHES THE RESULTS OF A SAMPLING OF ALL MEMBERS OF THE FRG ELECTORATE 30 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER. HERE THE CDU/CSU INCREASED ITS LEAD FROM 43.9 PERCENT TO 54.3 PERCENT. THE FDP JUMPED FROM 5.6 PERCENT TO 9.2 PERCENT. THE SPD DROPPED FROM 49.5 PERCENT TO 35.4 PERCENT. SPLINTER PARTY SUPPORT REMAINED ALMOST CONSTANT AT 1.1 PERCENT.

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INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

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8. THIS INCREASE OF SYMPATHY FOR THE UNION PARTIES WAS EVEN MORE APPARENT AMONGST YOUNGER MALES WHERE, FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE 18 TO 24 YEAR RANGE THERE WAS A JUMP FROM 24.9 PERCENT TO 38.4 PERCENT. THIS PROVED TO BE THE CASE WITH ONLY A FEW MORE (36.9 PERCENT) OF THE FEMALES QUESTIONED, HOWEVER, COMPARED WITH 34.5 PERCENT IN 1972. THE PROGRESSIVE POLICIES OF THE GOVERNMENT COALITION TOWARDS WOMEN, FOR EXAMPLE IN THE ABORTION LEGISLATION DEBATE, MAY HAVE PREVENTED MORE FEMALES FROM CHOOSING THE CDU/CSU.

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9. A SEPARATE SURVEY TAKEN IN THE LATE SPRING BY A SECOND POLLING ORGANIZATION CAME UP WITH SIMILAR FIGURES TO POINT TO THE IMPROVING POSITION OF THE UNION PARTIES AMONGST THE YOUNGEST MEMBERS OF THE FRG ELECTORATE. OF THOSE 18-23 THAT WERE QUESTIONED, 37.8

PERCENT OPTED FOR THE CDU/CSU VERSUS 31.3 PERCENT OF THOSE 24-29 YEARS OLD. THE FDP, WITH 15.4 PERCENT VERSUS 13.5 PERCENT ALSO IMPROVED SIMILARLY WITH THIS YOUNGEST SEGMENT. ON THE OTHER HAND, 53.8 PERCENT OF THOSE 24-29 LEAN TO THE SPD IN COMPARISON TO 44.9 PERCENT FROM THE YOUNGEST GROUP.

10. STATISTICS OF THE VARIOUS "LAND" ELECTIONS WHICH TOOK PLACE BETWEEN THE LAST BUNDESTAG ELECTION AND THE PRESENT CAMPAIGN ALSO CONFIRM THIS SHIFT AMONGST YOUTH AWAY FROM THE LEFT. IN THESE REGIONAL ELECTIONS (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF BAVARIA, BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG AND THE RHINELAND-PALATINATE) YOUTH IN THE 18-25 AGE BRACKET CONTINUED TO FAVOR THE SPD/FDP. YET, IN HAMBURG THERE WAS ABOUT A 9 PERCENT SHIFT FROM THE 1972 NATIONAL ELECTION TOTAL TO THE CDU IN THIS AGE GROUP. IN LOWER SAXONY THE CDU GAINED 6.5 PERCENT, IN HESSE 7 PERCENT, IN SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN 9 PERCENT, IN NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA 6 PERCENT, IN THE SAARLAND 9 PERCENT AND IN BREMEN (WHERE THE FDP PICKED UP THE MOST SUPPORT) 1.5 PERCENT FROM THIS ELECTORATE SEGMENT...WITH LITTLE DISTINCTION ON THOSE OCCASIONS BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE VOTING PATTERNS.

11. DESPITE THESE SHIFTS, THE SPD CONTINUES TO BE OVERREPRESENTED IN THE 18-25 AGE GROUP, AND FOR THAT REASON THE YOUNG SOCIALISTS ARE ATTEMPTING IN THE PRESENT CAMPAIGN TO DOWNPLAY THE SO-CALLED MOVEMENT TO CENTER AMONGST YOUNG WEST GERMANS. THE FACT REMAINS, HOWEVER, THAT MOST SIGNS POINT TO THE CONTRARY. TWO LEADING JUSOS HAVE PRIVATELY ADMITTED TO US THAT THE PASSIONATE INVOLVEMENT ON THE PART OF THE YOUNG SOCIALIST MEMBERSHIP IS JUST NOT ON HAND THIS YEAR, EVEN THOUGH THEY REACT WITH HORROR TO THE THOUGHT OF A RETURN OF STRAUSS TO A BONN GOVERNMENT. THE EARLY EMOTIONAL START OF THE OPPOSITION, THE DYNAMIC CAMPAIGNS OF THE CDU'S COMPARALIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TIVELY YOUNG CANDIDATES KOHL AND BIEDENKOPF, AND REVELATIONS OF MISUSE OF POWER BY SENIOR SPD REGIONAL LEADERS HAVE COMBINED TO TAKE THE LUSTER FROM THE SPD IMAGE AMONGST YOUNGER VOTERS. IN CONTRAST, THE HARD SPADE WORK BY THE CDU/CSU TO ATTRACT AN ACTIVE YOUTH FOLLOWING HAS PAID OFF. AT RALLIES IN MUNICH, FRANKFURT, STUTTGART,-BOCHUM, THE MORE ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE OF THE CDU YOUTH WAS AT ONCE APPARENT, EVEN IF THEY WERE LESS NUMEROUS THAN THEIR JUSO-JUDO COUNTERPARTS.

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12. A CLEAR DANGER FOR THE GOVERNMENT COALITION IS THAT MANY OF ITS OWN YOUTH SUPPORTERS MAY NOT TURN OUT IN FULL STRENGTH ON ELECTION DAY; THIS COULD BE COSTLY IN THE PRESENT NECK-AND-NECK CONTEST. ELECTION PARTICIPATION BY YOUNG WEST GERMANS HAS ALWAYS BEEN LESS THAN THE NORM, PARTICULARLY AMONGST YOUNGER FEMALES. IN THE PAST FOUR ELECTIONS THE NATIONAL TURNOUT AVERAGED BETWEEN 85.9 AND 91.3 PERCENT, THAT OF VOTERS UNDER 25, ON THE OTHER HAND, BETWEEN 76.6 AND 84.5 PERCENT. LUKE-WARM SUPPORT BY PRO-COALITION YOUTH COULD THEREFORE HURT THE SCHMIDT-GENSCHER FORTUNES.

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13. TO ATTRACT MORE SUPPORT FROM THE YOUNG, ALL FOUR OF THE PARLIAMENTARY PARTIES HAVE FIELDDED SOME YOUNG CANDIDATES IN DISTRICTS (OR LAND LISTS) WHERE THEY STAND A FAIR CHANCE OF ELECTION. THE CDU AND CSU CAN POINT TO NEARLY A DOZEN POSSIBILITIES AND THE SMALLER FDP CAN EVEN CLAIM FIVE IN THAT CATEGORY. THE SPD APPEARS TO HAVE OFFERED COMPARATIVELY FEWER GOOD SEATS TO ITS YOUNGER LEADERS, HOWEVER. THE TWO FORMER JUSO CHAIRMEN NOW RUNNING IN HESSE (VOIGT) AND IN BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG (ROTH) BOTH FACE A DIFFICULT BATTLE.

14. FAR LEFT AND FAR RIGHT SPLINTER PARTIES WILL GARNER LITTLE SUPPORT FROM THE YOUNG VOTERS ON OCTOBER 3. AT BEST THEY CAN ONLY HOPE TO MAKE A SMALL RIPPLE, JUST AS THEIR YOUNG SUPPORTERS HAVE BEEN EASILY SHOUTED DOWN IN THE MAJOR CAMPAIGN RALLIES THUS FAR. THERE WILL BE EXCEPTIONS: IN HAMBURG AND BREMEN RADICAL PARTIES COULD ATTRACT 5-10 PERCENT OF THE 18-25 YEARS OLD VOTE. ELSEWHERE, IF RESULTS IN THE LATEST LAND ELECTIONS HOLD, THE SPLINTER PARTIES WILL BE LUCKY TO GET 1 PERCENT.  
HILLENBRAND

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